

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 438

By Johnson

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Jose Fernandez of Franklin.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Jose Fernandez; and

WHEREAS, Jose Fernandez was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, Jose Fernandez introduced the game of soccer to the residents of Williamson County; and

WHEREAS, a native of Spain, Jose Fernandez called Franklin home for forty-five years until his death in 2015; and

WHEREAS, upon discovering that organized soccer did not exist in Williamson County, Mr. Fernandez began to dream of bringing the sport he loved to his new home; and

WHEREAS, in 1977, he and Fred Eckhardt created a nonprofit organization, the Middle Tennessee Soccer Association, which later became the Williamson County Soccer Association; and

WHEREAS, urging parents to involve their children in soccer, he wrote articles for the local newspaper and appeared on a weekly sports cable television broadcast. He also reached out to local businesses to sponsor teams; and

WHEREAS, the Franklin Special School District and the Williamson County School System offered some of their unused land for soccer fields; and

WHEREAS, as soccer grew in popularity among the residents of Williamson County, the soccer association needed its own home; Jose Fernandez and others in the community.

contacted the TVA and negotiated the development of several acres of soccer fields, now known as the Williamson County Soccer Complex; and

WHEREAS, not only did Mr. Fernandez bring soccer to Williamson County, he initiated the development of select team soccer for those who wished to develop higher-level skills; he also helped bring Olympic Development Programs to the county, and helped create one of the region's first invitational soccer tournaments; and

WHEREAS, his efforts also impacted local schools; by 1983, four area high schools had soccer teams, and by 1986, TSSAA voted to approve soccer as an official high school sport; and

WHEREAS, Jose Fernandez led efforts to build an indoor soccer stadium, and in 1995, an indoor facility was added to the Williamson County Soccer Complex; and

WHEREAS, due to his perseverance and leadership, soccer in Williamson County has grown to a year-round sport featuring several leagues for youth, adults, and schools; it offers indoor soccer programs, summer camps, and select team opportunities; and

WHEREAS, Jose Fernandez's passion for the sport was evident in his prestigious record of success, and he epitomized the spirit of hard work and commitment to excellence that are characteristic of all true Tennesseans; and

WHEREAS, throughout his life, Jose Fernandez demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of soccer enthusiasts around the world; and

WHEREAS, he was also deeply devoted to his family, and always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Jose Fernandez leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Jose Fernandez for his many contributions to the

sport of soccer in Williamson County, and extend to his family our deepest appreciation for the contributions Mr. Fernandez made during his lifetime to the Williamson County community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Jose Fernandez.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.